Character of Dr. Manmohan Singh

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While it was Annie Besant, the English woman, who helped the Congress form, Antonio Maino, the Dame de Italian, could cause its eventual liquidation. If not the maturity of the Indian electorate, at least the public allergy for the Congress' insensitivity to the national ethos that she infused into her party apparatus could ensure that, and as and when that happens, it could be one of the many ironies of the chequered history of Hindustan. And for her part, even though Sonia has been unwittingly carrying on her man's 'work in progress' of making the congress coffin for years, but yet, seemingly, it is their uninspiring son, who is probably destined to finish the job and put the final nail in it as well.

Let it be, but what about the man, who had unashamedly served Sonia's devilish cause as her proxy premier for a decade?

In his belated address to the nation, as its Prime Minister, while dealing with the populist measures ushered in by him, ostensibly ordained by Sonia to pave the prime way for her son, he had no qualms in appropriating to himself the 1991 economic reforms that were indeed fathered by his mentor PV Narasimha Rao.

If anything, that was true to his character.

But for Rao, who fostered him, by now he would have been a forgotten ex-governor of the Reserve Bank of India, one amongst many before him, not to speak of those who succeeded him. What a decent man's morality would demand when his patron saint falls on bad times? Maybe, to leave the sinking boat is fine for a careerist politician but desertion wouldn't be the in thing for any decent guy in his position, and that's human morality is all about.

But what did the wily Sardarji do? With his mentor in dumps, he visualized greener pastures for himself in the shade of Sonia's Bofors-tainted *pallu*. Well, it calls for no genius to foresee that the political dispensations of NDA 'n UPA would have alternate reigns on the musical chair of the *Dillii kursi* and that when the latter's turn comes; Sonia's *'foreign origin'* handicap would force her to concede the prized seat to someone else from her party ranks.

So what did the great survival artist do?

Not only did he distance himself from his lost out mentor but he unreservedly played the second fiddle to Sonia. Having privately ingratiated himself to her in every conceivable manner; he publicly declared that he's not a *'prime ministerial material'* in an idiot box interview, not once, but twice that was in case her ears fail to pick that up in the first instance. By the same token, Pranab Mukherjee paid the price for throwing his hat into the prime ministerial ring, presumably owned by the pseudo-Gandhis, not once but twice.

But then, what to make out of all that?

If he was secretly coveting the *gaddi* while publicly averring that he was not up to the mark, then he was cunningly self-serving. And if he genuinely believed that he was not a *'prime ministerial material'* and still grabbed the job, then he was morally dishonest. Either way, he's not a man of intellectual integrity or someone with moral conviction and /or

both for which India has paid the price for having had him as its spine-less head for two decades. Maybe, he wouldn't have coveted money for himself but all the same he served Sonia's covetous causes and shamed the position of the Prime Minister, of the largest democracy on earth. That what made Modi famously characterize him as the one blessed with the art of bathing with a raincoat on him!

That's not all; besides being servile to Sonia, the way he clung to his powerful seat, rendered powerless by her, disregarded by his own bureaucrats, disobeyed by his cabinet members, and humiliated by Rahul, he has ensured a premier place for himself in the Indian Hall of Infamy. But as he never seemed to have minded about his self-inflicted fate; he only should have known to what avail.

And to cap it all, when his mentor's mortal remains were being abused by the vengeful Sonia, who never forgave Rao for daring to cut her dynasty to size, he turned his shameless head the other way. Such was the personal character, political ethos, and the morality of mind of this cunning man, who had conned India as the benign face of Sonia's *rākshas regime.*

Hence, Sanjaya Baru should have known better not to name his book on his times with him as *The Accidental Prime Minister,* which title befits only PV Narasimha Rao, for when the call came from the just-widowed Sonia, he had already packed his bag and baggage to move into his political *vanaprastha*, and not his ex-deputy, who had been cunningly paving his servile path to 7 RCR.